

- 1922 Under his leadership the Members of the Senate of the Calcutta University rejected the Government's offer of a grant which was subjected to conditions curtailing University's autonomy.
- 1923 Demanded full freedom in University matters.
Declined to accept the conditional offer of Vice-Chancellorship of the Calcutta University.
Eldest daughter Kamala died.
- 1924 Retired from the Bench on 1st January.
Convocation address at the Lucknow University.
Endowed 'Kamala Lecturership' fund in the Calcutta University in memory of his daughter.
Resumed practice at the Bar.
Accepted brief to appear as Maharaja of Dumraon's counsel in 'Dumraon Case' at Patna High Court.
On 25 May, died suddenly at Patna at 6.30 p.m.

WORKS OF SIR ASUTOSH MOOKERJEE

SANSKRIT

Jimutavahana. The Vyavahara-matrika of Jimutavahana. By Sir Asutosh Mookerjee. Calcutta, The Asiatic Society, 1912. (Memoirs of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, v. 3, no. 5).

BENGALI

Books

Jatiya sahitya. Calcutta, Ramaprasad Mukhopadhyay, 1932.

Addresses, lectures etc.

Banga sahityer bhabisyat. [Address delivered as President of the 10th Bangiya Sahitya Sammelan at Bankipore, 1916.] Calcutta, Asutosh Mookerjee, 1916.

Bharatiya sahityer bhabisyat. [Presidential address in Howrah Sahitya Sammelan, 6th Baishakh 1326.] Calcutta, Upendranath Bhattacharya, 1919.

Jatiya sahityer unnati. [Address of the President, given at the Uttarbanga Sahitya Sammelan, 1916.] Calcutta, Printed by N. Chatterjee, 1916.

Krittibas smritichinha sthapan. [Address delivered at a meeting held at Phulia with the object of founding a memorial to Krittibas, author of Bengali Ramayan, 1916.] Calcutta, Printed by N. Chatterjee, 1916.

Mahakabi Michael Madhusudan Dutta, abhibhasan. Calcutta, Sathi Press, 1917.

ENGLISH

Books

Arithmetic for schools, by Asutosh Mukhopadhyay and S. C. Basu. 9th ed., rev. & enl. Calcutta, S. C. Auddy & Co, 1937. First published in 1901.

(A) Diary, Calcutta, Asutosh Mookerjee Memorial Institute, 1998.

(An) Elementary treatise on the geometry of conics. London, Macmillan & Co., 1893.

(The) Law of perpetuities in British India. Calcutta, Thacker Spink & Co., 1902. Tagore Law Lectures, 1898.

On Pott's Euclid, some interesting riders & problems. Kolkata, Association for Improvement of Mathematics Teaching (AIMT) & Asutosh Mookerjee Memorial Institute, 2004.

Addresses, lectures etc.

Address [at the] Second Oriental Conference at the University of Calcutta, 28 Jan. 1922. Calcutta, University Press, 1922.

Address delivered at the first convocation of the University of Mysore, 19 Oct., 1918. Calcutta, R. Cambay & Co., 1918.

Addresses : In Calcutta University, Convocation addresses, v.4 (1907-1914) & v.5 (1921-1923).
Addresses : literary and academic. Calcutta, R. Cambay & Co., 1915.

Annual addresses delivered at the Asiatic Society of Bengal. 1905-1911, 1913, 1915, 1921, 1922.

Democratic control of universities. [A lecture] at the Lucknow University Union. 8 Jan., 1924.

Historical research in Bihar and Orissa, an address. Calcutta, University Press, 1924.

(The) History of the Indian Museum, an inaugural address delivered ... on Nov. 28, 1913, in the Museum Lecture Hall. Calcutta, Trustees of the Indian Museum, 1914.

Letters of Sir Asutosh. Off-print from the Calcutta Review. Nov. 1924.

[Miscellaneous correspondence regarding University legislation.] 1922.

(The) Study of law; address on the occasion of the inauguration ceremony of the Department

of Legal Studies in the Benares Hindu University on the 4th Aug., 1923.

(The) University and the nation; address at the convocation of the Lucknow University on the 7th Jan., 1924.

Articles

Application of Gauss's Theory of curvature to the evaluation of double integrals. [Mentioned in A.C. Bose's In memoriam. Calcutta Review, July 1924.]

(The) Differential equation of trajectory. Calcutta, Baptist Mission Press, 1887. Reprinted from the Asiatic Society of Bengal, v. 56, pt. 2 no. 1, 1887.

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Mathematical questions and solutions. In The Educational times. London. 1890: v. 43, p.38, 302, 341, 528; 1891: v. 44, p. 238; 1892 : v. 45, p. 270, 305, 448, 532.

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(A) Memoir on plane analytic geometry. In Asiatic Society of Bengal. Journal. 1887. v.56, pt.2, no. 3 and In Proceedings. 1887.

(A) Note on elliptic functions. Extracted from the Quarterly Journal of Pure and Applied Mathematics, no. 83, 1886.

Note on Stoke's Theorem of hydrokinetic circulation. In Asiatic Society of Bengal. Journal. 1890. v.59, pt. 2, no. 1.

On a curve of aberrancy. In Asiatic Society of Bengal. Journal. 1890. v.59, pt. 2, no. 1.

On a geometrical theorem. In The Messenger of Mathematics. 1881.

On an application of differential equations to the theory of plane cubics. [Mentioned in A. C. Bose's In memoriam. Calcutta Review, July 1924.]

On Clebsch's Transformation of the hydrokinetic equations. In Asiatic Society of Bengal. Journal. 1890. v. 59, pt. 2.

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On some definite integrals. [Mentioned in A. C. Bose's In memoriam. Calcutta Review, July 1924.]

On the differential equation of a trajectory. Calcutta, Baptist Mission Press, 1887. Reprinted from the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, v. 56, pt. 2, no. 1, 1887 and In proceedings. 1887.

On the differential equation of all parabolas. Calcutta, Baptist Mission Press, 1888. Reprinted from the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. 1888. v. 57, pt. 2, no 4 and In Proceedings. 1888.

Proof on Euclid I, 25. In The Messenger of Mathematics. 1881. v. 10.

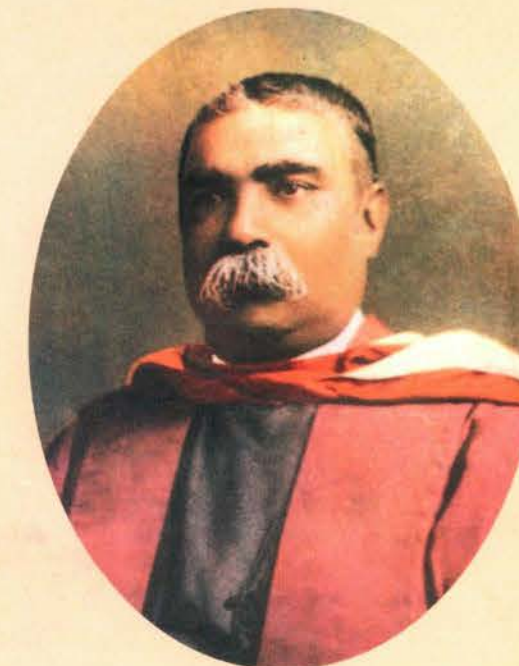
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Government of India National Library Kolkata



1864 – 1924

142 nd Birthday Celebrations of SIR ASUTOSH MOOKERJEE

29 June 2005

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SIR ASUTOSH MOOKERJEE (1864–1924)

Sir Asutosh Mookerjee, a versatile genius, was born in Kolkata on 29 June 1864. His father, Dr. Gangaprasad Mookerjee, was one of the earliest graduates of the Calcutta University and a well-known medical practitioner of his time. Jagattarini Devi was his mother.

Sir Asutosh had a brilliant academic career. His first research paper on Mathematics entitled "On a Geometrical Theorem" was published in the "Messenger of Mathematics", Cambridge, in 1881. Sir Asutosh topped the list of B.A. Examination in 1884, stood first class first in Mathematics and received the Eshan and Vizianagram scholarships, and the Hurrish Chandra Prize. He stood first in M. A. Examination in Mathematics in 1885. He passed M. A. in Physical Science in 1886. In this year he sat for the Premchand Roychand Studentship Examination in Mathematics, pure and mixed, and Physics and won the award.

His love for Mathematics did not, however, prevent him from paying attention to other subjects. His versatility struck all with wonder. Sanskrit, English, Philosophy, Religion, History, Literature, Social Sciences, Law and Science claimed his attention as much as Mathematics. His contributions appeared in well-known journals of the day in and outside India and won for him well-deserved recognition. He acquired a knowledge of French and German to study the original works of famous mathematicians and also memoirs published in foreign scientific journals.

Sir Asutosh took the Bachelor's degree in Law in 1887 and was enrolled as Vakil of the Calcutta High Court. He continued his legal studies even after he joined the High Court and obtained the degree of Doctor of Law in 1894. From 1904 till the end of 1923 he was a Judge of the High Court. For a few months in 1920 he acted as Chief Justice of Bengal. He was universally regarded as one of the greatest Judges in British India.

For a short time Sir Asutosh was in the Legislative chambers of India. In 1899 he was elected to the Bengal Legislative Council as the representative of the Calcutta University. He was re-elected to it in 1901. In 1903 the Calcutta Corporation sent him there as its representative. In the same year he was elected to the Imperial Legislative Council. For some time he also served as a member of the Calcutta Corporation.

The greatest work of Sir Asutosh lay, however, in the sphere of University education. His lasting achievement was transformation of the Calcutta University from a merely examining body to one of the greatest Teaching Universities in the East. Sir Asutosh was appointed as a member of the Senate in 1889, when he was only 25 years old. The Calcutta University has produced many a distinguished son but none so passionately devoted to her as Asutosh Mookerjee. In 1906 he was appointed as Vice-Chancellor and continued to hold the office till 1914. He was again appointed as Vice-Chancellor in 1921 and held office for two years.

During the years that he was Vice-Chancellor, the foundations of a teaching and research University were laid on a firm basis at Calcutta. Practically from out of nothing the University began to grow and expand. Sir Asutosh took the fullest advantage of whatever opportunity came in his way, and had often to fight against tremendous odds in giving effect to his ideas. One of the greatest achievements of Sir Asutosh was the encouragement of the study of the Indian vernaculars, especially of Bengali.

Sir Asutosh had an abiding sympathy for scholars in all departments of knowledge. Most of the important associations and learned societies interested in the promotion of advanced study and research in Bengali were either guided by him or benefited by his advice and experience. He founded the Calcutta Mathematical Society in 1908, was for a number of years President of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. He was also, for many years, Chairman of the Trustees of the Indian Museum, of the Council of the Imperial Library (now National Library) and of the Council of the Calcutta Sanskrit Association. He was also associated with many other learned institutions and associations, both India and abroad.

For his personality, fearlessness and grit Sir Asutosh was popularly known as "Bengal's Tiger". A little known trait of this charismatic, multi-dimensional personality is that he was an avid bibliophile. His personal collection, donated to the National Library in 1949 by his four sons, with certain conditions, is believed to be the largest single-donor collection to be housed in any National Library in the world. This legendary figure's real love for scholarship is eloquently reflected in the variety of subjects covered by the collection.

The Asutosh Collection is regarded as unique because of its size, comprising of 87,500 volumes (approx.), and the rarity of many of the books, documents etc. that form part of it. Books in different languages and in varied subjects, such as Anthropology, Astronomy, Botany, Economics, Fine Arts, Geography, History, Law, Literature, Mathematics, Philosophy, Physics,

Physiology, Religion, Social Sciences, Zoology etc. are to be found in this collection. The idea that a single individual could study so many subjects in depth and range, boggles one's imagination.

A BRIEF CHRONOLOGY

- 1864 On 29 June, at 3.55 a.m. Asutosh, the eldest son of Dr. Gangaprasad Mookerjee and Jagattarini Devi, was born at Malanga Lane, Bowbazar, Kolkata. Grandfather Biswanath Mookerjee came to reside in a village called Jeerat in the District of Hooghly. The original ancestral home of the family was in Digsui near Mogra in the same district.
- 1869 Asutosh was admitted to a primary school Chakraberia Sisu Vidyalaya at Bhowanipur, Kolkata.
- 1872 In April, Dr. Gangaprasad Mookerjee came to stay in his newly constructed house at 77, Russa Road North (now Asutosh Mookerjee Road).
- 1874 Asutosh went to Mathura for a change of climate. Met Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar at Mogalsarai Railway Station.
- 1875 Asutosh met Vidyasagar again at Thacker & Spink Bookstore in Kolkata. Vidyasagar presented the 'Life and Adventure of Robinson Crusoe' with his signature.
- 1876 Admitted to South Suburban School Main, Bhowanipur, in the 4th class. Pandit Sibnath Shastri was the Headmaster of the School then. Madhusudan Das, the great Orissa leader, was one of his private tutors.
- 1879 Passed Entrance Examination, Calcutta University, standing second in order of merit with scholarship of Rs. 20.00 per month.
- 1880 Joined the Presidency College, Kolkata. Swami Vivekananda was one of his classmates for sometime in the B. A. class.
- 1881 Passed First Arts Examination of the Calcutta University standing third, despite serious illness. His first research paper on Mathematics entitled 'On a Geometrical Theorem' was published in the 'Messenger of Mathematics', Cambridge.
- 1881-94 Publication of various original research papers in European and Indian journals, highly regarded by well-known scientists of the time.
- 1883 Participated in a demonstration by the students of the Presidency College protesting against the conviction of Surendranath Banerjee for contempt of Court.
- 1884 Topped the list of successful candidates in the B.A. Examination; stood first class first in Mathematics. Received the Eshan and Vizianagram scholarships, and the Hurrish Chandra Prize. Joined the City College for Bachelor of Law course. Became Member, London Mathematical Society.
- 1884-86 Awarded J. M. Tagore Law Gold Medal for three successive years.
- 1885 Stood first in M.A. Examination in Mathematics. Elected Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society and Member, Royal Society of Edinburgh.
- 1886 Passed M.A. in Physical Science and Mixed Mathematics; first student of the Calcutta University to obtain Master Degrees in more than one subject. Married Sreemati Jogmaya Devi, second daughter of Pandit Ramnarayan Bhattacharya of Krishnanagar. Won Premchand Roychand Studentship and Mouatt Gold Medal. Became Fellow, Royal Society of Edinburgh; Member, Royal Asiatic Society and Bedford Association for the Improvement of Geometrical Teaching.
- 1887 Joined the Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science as Hony. Professor of Mathematics. Appointed as Examiner in Mathematics, Calcutta University. Became Fellow, London Physical Society. Took Bachelors Degree in Law.
- 1888 Served as Articled Clerk of Sir Rasbehari Ghosh. Enrolled as a Vakil of the Calcutta High Court. Became Fellow, Mathematical Societies of Edinburgh and Paris.
- 1889 Became Fellow of the Senate and Member of the Syndicate of the Calcutta University. Father died on 13 December.
- 1890 Became Members, Mathematical Society of Palermo, Sicily and Societe de Physique of France.
- 1891 Proposed introduction of Bengali language as a subject of study and examination in

all standards of the Calcutta University. It was rejected by the Syndicate.

- 1893 Enrolled as Member of the Royal Irish Academy.
- 1894 Received the Degree of Doctor of Law. Became Member of the Calcutta Corporation (1894-1904).
- 1898 Appointed as Prasanna Coomar Tagore Law Lecturer, Calcutta University.
- 1899 Elected to the Bengal Legislative Council as the representative of the Calcutta University.
- 1900 Became Fellow, American Mathematical Society.
- 1901 Re-elected to the Bengal Legislative Council from the Calcutta University.
- 1902 Became a co-opted Member of the Indian Universities Commission (Releigh Commission) from Bengal.
- 1903 Elected to the Bengal Legislative Council from Calcutta Corporation. Elected to the Imperial Legislative Council.
- 1904 Appointed as Puisne Judge, Calcutta High Court.
- 1906 Appointed as Vice-Chancellor of the University of Calcutta and held office for four successive terms (1906-1914). Presided over the committee appointed by the Government of India to frame necessary regulations under the Indian Universities Act, 1904.
- 1907 Became President of the Asiatic Society of Bengal (1907-09).
- 1908 Founder-President, Calcutta Mathematical Society. Calcutta University conferred D.Sc. (Honoris Causa) upon him.
- 1909 Elected as President of the Board of Trustees, Indian Museum. President of the Board of Sanskrit Examination, Bengal, Behar & Orissa. Awarded the title 'Companion of the Star of India'
- 1910 Elected as President of the Imperial (now National) Library Council (1910-1924). President Bibudha Gnani Pandit Sabha, Nabadwip; awarded the title 'Saraswati' by the Sabha. President, Bangiya Dharmankur Baudhya Sabha. Made compulsory the study and examination of Bengali from Matriculations to B.A. in the Calcutta University.
- 1911 Received Knighthood.
- 1912 Awarded the title 'Shastra Bachaspati' from Dacca Saraswat Samaj.
- 1913 Established Post-Graduate Departments with teaching and research facilities in the Calcutta University.
- 1914 Foundation of the College of Science, Calcutta University, was laid on March 27. Retired from Vice-Chancellorship of the Calcutta University. Presided over the First Indian Science Congress in Kolkata; one of the founders of the Indian Science Congress. Received the title 'Sambuddhagama Chakravarti' by Ceylon Mahabodhi Society. Mother died on 14 April.
- 1915 Laid the foundation of 'Krittibas Memorial', Phulia; address delivered as President. President, Mahabodhi Society. Delivered Presidential Address at North Bengal Literary Association.
- 1916 Presided over the Bengal Literary Conference, Bankipur, Bihar and Uttar Banga Sahitya Sammelan, Rangpur. Awarded the title 'Vidyarnava'.
- 1917 Appointed as Member of the Universities Commission (Sadler Commission, 1917-19). Became President of the Post-Graduate Council of the Calcutta University. Introduced Indian vernaculars at M.A. level for study and examination. Vice-President, Hony. Treasurer-Librarian, Asiatic Society of Bengal in successive years.
- 1918 Delivered First Convocation Address of the Mysore University in October.
- 1919 Presided over the Bengal Literary Conference at Howrah.
- 1920 Appointed as Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court for six months. Received the title 'Bharat Martanda'.
- 1921 Appointed for the fifth time as Vice-Chancellor of the University of Calcutta (1921-1923). Re-elected as President, Asiatic Society of Bengal (1921-1923). M.A. Examination in vernacular of the Calcutta University started through his untiring efforts. Endowed 'Jagattarini Gold Medal' in the Calcutta University in memory of his mother to be awarded for contribution to Arts or Science; first recipient was Rabindranath Tagore.